

Washington have not tackled the government's largest expense—mandatory spending programs such as Social Security and Medicare. This debt crisis does not only present a fiscal problem, it is inextricably linked to the global security concerns we are seeing today.

In order to have a strong foreign policy, we have to have a strong military, but to have a strong military we have to have a vibrant and growing strong economy. There is no secret that down through history the countries that have had the strongest militaries, and therefore the most secure foreign policy, are those that had the most vibrant economies of their day. Under this President's foreign policy decisions, he has created a power vacuum and put the country in a much weaker position.

Today our enemies don't fear us and our allies don't trust us. Just three decades ago we brought down the Soviet Union with the power of our ideas and the strength of our economy. Look at the world today. Over the past 7 years, we have seen the rise of a global security crisis that is unrivaled in my lifetime. We have seen the rise of traditional rivals such as China and Russia grow more aggressive. We have seen North Korea and Iran actually collaborate on nuclear proliferation. We have seen Syria cross red lines and terrorism fill power vacuums in the Middle East and around the world.

Last week North Korea claimed to have successfully completed its fourth nuclear weapons test with a much more powerful weapon than they possessed before. This is a sobering and stark reminder of the true consequences our country faces when our President shows weakness in the face of these radical regimes. And not only have we witnessed weaknesses, but we have also seen this President naively trust a country like Iran, the world's largest state sponsor of terrorism today.

Since President Obama announced his dangerous Iran deal in July despite strong bipartisan opposition, Iran has actively accelerated its ballistic missile program and continued financial support for terrorism in the region, in violation of the very sanction we just heard on this floor.

Iran has fired rockets near U.S. warships, fomented unrest in Yemen, taken more Americans hostages, refused to release an American passenger who has been held for 3 years, convicted an American journalist of spying, banned American products from being sold in Iran, and renewed its support for Hamas and Hezbollah terrorists.

From the beginning, President Obama didn't listen to military advice and prematurely pulled our troops out of Iraq, creating another power vacuum. ISIS, of course, we now know, grew into that power vacuum and sprouted influence not only in the Middle East but in Africa and Asia as well.

Last November, this President told the American people in a news interview:

We have contained them. They have not gained ground in Iraq. And in Syria if they'll come in, they'll leave. But you don't see this systematic march by ISIL across the terrain.

Well, we now know ISIS is not being contained in their ability to wage war against the West and will stop at nothing to deliver terrorism even to the shores of America. The President's plan has failed, it is plain and simple, and we sit here today with no strategy to defeat ISIS.

The world needs to see decisive action from the United States, not empty rhetoric that can't be backed up. We need a new leader who takes every threat of any size seriously. Moving forward, nothing can go unchecked and unmet without relentless American resolve.

No matter how we measure it, President Obama's economic and foreign policies have indeed failed. Time and again, he has refused to change course when his policies didn't work, when they didn't help the American people, whom he claims to champion. Instead, this President has created the fourth arm of government—the regulators—and they are sucking the very life out of our free enterprise system today. Now, fewer people are working, wages are stagnant, incomes aren't growing, the debt is soaring, and the world is much more dangerous than it was 8 years ago.

But tonight we will also hear from this President about his optimism for the future. Well, I get that. I share that optimism but only because I believe we can do better. We can do a lot better. We can tackle our national debt crisis. We can save Social Security and Medicare. We can defeat terrorism once and for all. We cannot do it without bold leadership, however. We cannot do it without a sense of urgency or responsibility. We cannot do it unless the political class in this town—Washington, DC—finally puts national interests in front of self-interests. We cannot do it without the will and support of the American people.

I believe in America. Georgians believe in America. Americans believe in America. Americans have always risen to the crisis of the day, and I believe we will rise to this crisis. But Washington needs to really listen to the American people, focus on solutions they support, and unite our Nation to make sure our best days are indeed ahead of us. We owe it to our children and our children's children, and the time to move is right now. The time for rhetoric has ended.

We need to face up to the two crises we have today: the global security crisis and our own debt crisis, which are interwoven together.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. Ayotte). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I withdraw the motion to proceed to S. 2232.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The motion is withdrawn.

AMERICAN SECURITY AGAINST FOREIGN ENEMIES ACT OF 2015—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I move to proceed to Calendar No. 300, H.R. 4038.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 300, H.R. 4038, a bill to require that supplemental certifications and background investigations be completed prior to the admission of certain aliens as refugees, and for other purposes.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 300, H.R. 4038, an act to require that supplemental certifications and background investigations be completed prior to the admission of certain aliens as refugees, and for other purposes.

Mitch McConnell, Rob Portman, John Thune, Tom Cotton, Steve Daines, James M. Inhofe, Mike Crapo, Thom Tillis, Roger F. Wicker, Lindsey Graham, Pat Roberts, John Cornyn, Shelley Moore Capito, John Boozman, Michael B. Enzi, James E. Risch, John McCain.

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum call be waived with respect to this cloture motion.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I further ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding rule XXII, the cloture vote occur at 2:30 p.m. on Wednesday, January 20, and that if cloture is invoked, then the time be counted as if it had been invoked at 6 p.m. on Tuesday, January 19.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business,